

Local woman helps Cambodian kids heal from sex trade life

By **LISA TALLYN**
Staff Writer

Last year Carin McCoy was with her daughter enjoying a latte in a local coffee shop when the sign "Free Trade Coffee" caught her eye.

Unaware what it meant, she asked her daughter about it who explained that the owners of the plantations where the coffee came from didn't bring in trafficking victims to harvest the beans.

Wanting to learn more, McCoy searched online for more information about trafficking. When she got home, she was shocked by what she read.

Her Internet search uncovered story after story of young girls who had been forced into the sex trade against their will. The girls, aged as young as four years old, had been taken from their homes and put into brothels all over the world.

Horrified by what she was reading, McCoy could not get the stories out of her mind and decided she wanted to do something to help these children. So she decided to join Not4Sale, a Canadian-based non-profit organization dedicated to the search, rescue and restoration of those children.

A project manager and trauma-based counsellor, she decided to volunteer as a project director, sold her Georgetown home, and moved to Cambodia to pre-

pare a safe and secure home for the children rescued from the brothels of Cambodia.

"It was a perfect match," said McCoy.

She said the decision to pick up and leave her home and head to Cambodia was not a tough one, she felt like she was supposed to go.

"It came together so easy," said McCoy.

When she arrived in Cambodia she lived for approximately three months in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, and through her contact with several large organizations learned more about what was going on in the sex trade.

"I realized it was darker than I thought. The brothels were everywhere, there were prostitutes everywhere. The kids are hidden," she said.

The Not4Sale home will be based in Siem Reap, where McCoy and the team are opening a high-risk after-care facility, which will house up to 12 girls. The girls will receive the medical and psychological care they need to heal from their extremely abusive lifestyle while living in a clean and safe environment—a place they can call home until they



CARIN MCCOY

can return to their own homes or communities as productive and whole citizens.

"These girls suffer all kinds of abuse while held captive," said McCoy. "They are expected to service between 10 to 15 customers a day. They are beaten, electrocuted, starved and abused. Eighty per cent of these children have been gang-raped and have no hope of escape. They are alienated by their families

and abused by society. The horrors they experience cannot be imagined by us here in Georgetown."

She said the good news is there are people who have left the comforts of North America to find these children and are working to change laws and make safe places for them. They are also providing proper programs for them to give them the skills needed to support themselves and contribute to their families.

McCoy said two weeks before she left Cambodia to come back to Georgetown for a visit reports in the local Cambodia newspapers stated 18 children under the age of 15 were rescued from broth-

els in Siem Reap. It was the largest raid to date she said. She said the children are being held in safe houses where they are receiving medical and professional care. She has visited them.

"All were small and frightened, but many managed to smile back at me as I entered the room," she said.

During her visit here McCoy is attempting to raise awareness throughout the province and funds to finance the facility and care of the children.

She plans to return to Cambodia this fall.

The facility is scheduled to open early next year. She estimates they will need about \$60,000 to cover the costs of the first year.

"Working alongside organizations like Chab Dai, World Hope, World Vision and IJM, great strides are being taken for the protection and safety and restoration of these children," said McCoy.

Not4Sale is part of Victory Children's Homes International Foundation. For more information or to make a donation to the project in Cambodia visit www.not4sale.ca or www.victorychildrenshomes.com

McCoy is available to speak to local groups about the situation in Cambodia and the project. She can be contacted through carinnot4sale@gmail.com. Her blog can be found at carinnot4sale.blogspot.com

Thanksgiving Savings!

NO TAX

ON EVERYTHING IN STOCK UNTIL SEPT 30 ONLY EXTENDED UNTIL OCTOBER 15

BIGGEST Selection of Laminate, Hardwood, Carpet and Ceramics

THOUSANDS of sq. ft. in store

BIGGEST SELECTION OF AREA RUGS AROUND!

• Vinyl • Ceramic • Hardwood • Laminate • Engineered • Cork • Bamboo • Carpet • Area Rugs • Much More

at the corner of **Winston Churchill & Hwy 7, Norval 905-873-7955**

Maria Britto
Sales Representative
Re/Max Realty Specialists Inc., Brokerage
A professional, dedicated Realtor for over 26 years.

(905) 456-3232
1-866-251-3232
maria@mariabritto.com
www.mariabritto.com

\$1,199,000 CHELTENHAM

CHELTENHAM IN THE VILLAGE
Custom Built Home. Unbelievable quality, elegant decor and all the bells & whistles. High end upgrades throughout. Custom kit with granite, glassed wall of windows overlooking tiered deck & farmland. Custom built bungalow with 3 generous bdrms, 3 baths on main floor, separate formal dining rm with 8' etched glass double door, main floor den, huge living rm and elegant foyer entry. Walkout bsmt with service entrance, huge great room/theatre room w/out to courtyard. Additional office or guest suite, gym, games room, furnace room, large English bar and full bath with shower. Truly a rare find in the quaint village of Cheltenham on a quiet executive court setting.